

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

The Poet Who Became a Revolutionary

*Susan Saxe, Brandeis University Co-ed,
Traded Campus for FBI Most Wanted List*

Susan Edith Saxe, 21. Magna cum laude graduate of Brandeis University. Daughter of well-to-do parents from Albany, N.Y. Wanted by the FBI on murder charges in the robbery slaying of a policeman. The question echoes from family, friends, fellow students: Why?

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There wasn't anything about her that would have drawn the eyes of her fellow passengers.

Mouse-brown hair. Hazel eyes. Glasses. Only 5-foot-2, but 150 pounds." Probably another college girl, flying back to school.

And in truth, Susan Saxe was a college girl. She had just graduated magna cum laude in English from Brandeis University. Now she was bound for Portland, Ore., to work and perhaps get her master's degree at the University of Oregon.

Or so she had written her parents back in Albany, N.Y. They had believed her. They were soon to know better.

SUSAN SAXE had lied to them.

As the plane winged west, the girl had several drinks. Then she began writing. Poetry, a habit of hers.

Her pen moved on, words for a friend who would later get the poem in the mail. They were words, too, for her mother, an answer to why the poet in the plane was now something more: a revolutionary. And an accused bank robber.

"Passion . . . I must have it.

"Intensity, depth, red meat and red wine,

"And strong bodies on creaking or slightly crunching springs . . .

"For your little girl.

"I only regret what I have not done.

"I never loved you."

A few days before, Susan Saxe stood in front of a bank with a childishly made fire bomb. It wouldn't light. Inside, cohorts were robbing the bank. It was frustrating.

There would be another bank robbery in Boston and a dead policeman. Susan's name would appear on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted List.

There would be perhaps other robberies "to finance the revolution." And for Susan these would be intensity.

IT ALL BEGAN in Albany 21 years before. There were no portents.

The first child of proper Jewish parents, her father well-to-do, in the plastics business with his brothers. Hebrew school, traditional upbringing, traditional values. The Girl Scouts.

So how did she come to this place in her life,

this airplane, this career aimed against the very society that spawned her, gave her everything she wanted? Everything?

When Susan Saxe and four companions were charged with the murder of the Boston policeman and the robbery of the Brighton branch of the State Street Bank and Trust Co. on Sept. 23, neither parents nor friends could believe she was involved.

"Isn't this stupid?" her brother Jimmy, 16, asked. "Not my niece, I know my niece," said Uncle Charlie. But a night on the telephone trying to find their daughter in Portland left Eliot and Rose Saxe with desperation and tears.

"She never lied to us," Rose Saxe told her husband.

"I have no illusions about my surviving the revolution. I know we will be the first stood against the wall . . ."

"She's lied to us now, Rose," he said.

Childhood memories faded. Marilyn Finkle Shapiro, a school mate from first grade through high school, recalls bits and pieces.

Susan would make up intricate fantasies. As early as the fifth grade she was writing short plays for her classmates to perform.

"Academically talented" in grammar school, she was an honors student in high school. Dutiful, respectful, a trifle aloof. Her poem "On Graduation" occupied an entire page in her yearbook.

It recalled "a year of lights and music . . . gilded moments climaxed by a Senior Ball, A towering fantasy, A last goodby.

"Graduation,

"And the dizzying ride has ended,

"The wooden horses hang fixless

"And the Carnival moves on, as it has before,

"To another time, another place."

THE OTHER TIME, the other place was Syracuse University where Susan complained that the campus was too big, too social and hardly an intellectual challenge.

After two years Susan transferred to Brandeis University, a small, intellectual campus

of some 3,000 students, Jewish-founded but nonsectarian place where she might find involvement, perhaps intensity. The small hand on the westward-bound airplane wrote:

"I will not be led by still waters

"With rod and staff,

"Although that is what one of my souls

"Longs for most.

"But that soul I put aside now.

"Because I must.

"And because that soul makes my mind (me) wonder

"Whether I have a soul at all!

"I will not be comforted.

"And I shall want."

At Brandeis she became interested in the modern novel and Jewish authors and their notion of family. Her professors remember her as conscientious not brilliant, but a worker.

BRANDEIS IS NOT a socially-oriented university. There is little dating, little organized activity. It is a pretty campus in the wooded rolling hills of Waltham, west of Boston. It is liberal in its courses, its student body.

Susan left the faculty with a variety of impressions: very strongly against the war, leftist, but not militant . . . a very stable, sane girl with a highly intelligent mind . . . there was a sense of frustration and indignation there but confined within the limits of reason.

Her first year at Brandeis she roomed with Ellen Sue Shapiro, a pretty girl, and a friend said Susan suffered by contrast. But that year she took care of her appearance. She lost weight. She quit smoking. She dated. But she seemed to sense an intelligence gap with men and she once told Sue Shapiro that she'd be a lot happier if she had 20 points less IQ.

"Junior year she became a lady," Sue Shapiro said. "But there wasn't enough in the role of a lady to satisfy her. Senior year she became a revolutionary."

THE TWO SUSANS wanted to room together their senior year, but Sue Shapiro was moving off campus. Mrs. Saxe wouldn't allow her daughter to join her. So she roomed alone in a turreted, towered dormitory called "The Castle." She began wearing blue jeans and a flannel shirt. She stopped wearing makeup. She began to gain weight again.

To both friends and faculty Susan was searching for a proper role for a woman, testing and discarding patterns she found in daily life. It was apparent that one of the patterns she had discarded was that of the upper middle class woman. She was extremely vocal on women's rights, and their equality with men.

On the subject of women's roles, Susan Saxe had no sense of humor.

She constantly pointed to her own mother as an example of what happens to women who aren't liberated. She joined a picket line around the library, and other minor campus demonstrations. But if she had revolution in mind at this time she kept it to herself.

SUSAN MET Stanley Bond at a party. He was handsome in a boyish way, 26 years old, a womanizer, a veteran of Vietnam and four years in Walpole State Prison for armed robbery. He was on parole and part of a rehabilitation program at Brandeis and other Massachusetts schools for bright ex-convicts.

Then came the entry of U.S. forces into Cambodia, the resulting nationwide campus protest and the slaying of four students at Kent State University. With Bond and Kathy

*"I only regret what I
have not done. I never
loved you . . ."*

Power, another vocal 20-year-old Brandeis student, she joined the National Student Strike Center to serve as an information exchange for the national protest effort.

Also at the strike center were two other ex-convicts, William Gilday and Robert Valeri, bound for scholastic careers. Within the core of the several hundred students who took part in the strike center effort, ferment set in.

Susan began breaking off with old friends, picking fights with them, returning letters or mementos. Ellen Sue Shapiro saw her at graduation, June 7. "I smiled at her and I said 'congratulations.' She gave me this thin smile. She looked like she needed help."

SUSAN REMAINED on campus after graduation with Bond, Miss Power, Gilday and Valeri. A group of students formed what they called a "Communiversities," a sort of commune on campus to discuss the agonies of the past year and the student strike. Most of the Brandeis students went home, and, as one faculty member recalls, with the moderating viewpoints gone, the group was left with their own ideas feeding on their own ideas.

The university ordered the strike center closed, and Kathy Power with four other students went to court to reopen it. To no avail. In the waning days of August, indictments now charge, Bond and Valeri robbed a bank in Evanston, Ill., of \$8,000. At the end of the

month, Susan went home to visit her parents. She attended a Bar Mitzvah for her cousin in a prim black dress and danced the hora. She told everyone the same story. She had wanted to get her masters and teach at the University of Oregon, but the university had withdrawn the offer. She was going there anyway to work in a bookstore and continue her writing.

On Aug. 31, her parents put her on a plane for Portland with an intervening stop where she visited a friend, told him she wanted him to help her, and Bond rob a bank and steal explosives from a quarry. He refused. During the four-hour conversation Bond held the floor to describe their plans as "a legitimate declaration of war . . . to steal money to buy guns to steal more money to create havoc."

The friend warned that they would get caught. Bond agreed. Susan said, "I have no illusions about my surviving the revolution. I know we will be the first stood against the wall."

Why? the friend asked. "I've got to have intensity," she replied.

SUSAN MAILED the poetry after she landed. She marked a return address on the envelope: "Alice, Wonderland, Yesterday."

Subsequently, clerks at the Allied Sav-More store in Portland identified Susan as the girl who bought \$500 worth of guns and ammunition Sept. 15. She also bought a copy of "The Shooter's Bible."

A landlady saw her Sept. 17 leaving a boarding house with an unidentified girl. They were carrying a heavy suitcase.

On Sept. 23, Patrolman Walter A. Schroeder, 41, was shot to death as he answered a bank robbery alarm at the Brighton, Mass., branch of the State Street Bank and Trust Co.

Later authorities issued a wanted alarm for Bond, Valeri, Gilday, Kathy Power and Susan Saxe in connection with the crime. The men were quickly caught.

The girls are still at large.

Recently, a girl called Susan's male friend and said she had passed through town and left two silver rings for him.

"Susan was always a thoughtful girl," he said.

She had also written him before she disappeared, saying her mother had written "inquiring about a life I'm no longer living."

"She wants to know," Susan wrote, "if there is anything she can send me. I'd like to write back, yes, send me two M60s, a Thompson machine gun, a case of thermite grenades and a pepperoni pizza to go . . ."

WANTED BY THE FBI

**INTERSTATE FLIGHT - MURDER;
THEFT OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY**

SUSAN EDITH SAXE

FBI No. 545,575 H



Three photographs of Susan Saxe figure prominently on this reproduction of a portion of an FBI Wanted flyer. The 21-year-old magna cum laude Brandeis University graduate is now on the FBI's most wanted list in connection with a bank robbery and the slaying of a patrolman. She "may be armed and should be considered very dangerous." In her own eyes, Susan is not a common criminal, but a revolutionary.